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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)  
SUBJECT: Tour d'Horizon with Prime Minister Gedi

REF: A) Nairobi 2559 B) Nairobi 2507

Classified by PolOff Mitch Benedict for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (SBU) Summary: The Ambassador and Special Envoy John Yates met Prime Minister Ali Gedi on June 21 to discuss the June 18 announcement of a general amnesty, preparations for the National Reconciliation Congress, the current security situation, and the PM's upcoming travel to Washington and New York. End Summary.

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Amnesty Announced While Arrests Continue  
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12. (C) In a meeting on June 21 with Prime Minister Ali Gedi the Ambassador praised the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) for the recent announcement of a general amnesty (Ref A) as a positive signal of the TFG's intentions to hold an inclusive National Reconciliation Congress (NRC). Other than the announcement there have been no details on the amnesty released. While the amnesty is a positive development, the Ambassador underscored the negative the perception caused by continued TFG and Ethiopian arrests and detentions of individuals and NGO personnel (Septel) of "one step forward, three steps back." The closure of SAACID, a well regarded and internationally funded women's and children's empowerment NGO that has worked on community-level programs and disarmament was raised as a case in point. SAACID staff have been detained, their computers, vehicles, and other property confiscated or destroyed, and their buildings and compound now occupied.

13. (C) Gedi claimed SAACID had failed to register as an NGO, and that TFG intelligence had revealed that the SAACID compound was being used to hide significant amounts of heavy weaponry. The Director of SAACID, Gedi informed us, had been released. (Comment: According to SAACID, however, two staff remained unaccounted for. Later in the day on June 21, we learned the Director and her husband had been re-arrested. SAACID told us the charges against the Director are that she is a Hawiye member opposed to the TFG and planning and committing terrorist acts against the TFG. An ongoing OXFAM and Dutch foreign ministry-financed program to assist 6,500 IDPs, as well as SAACID's partnership with WFP and other international organizations to provide humanitarian relief, health, sanitation, and education programming has been severely hampered. End Comment)

14. (C) The Ambassador highlighted the view of many that sizable numbers of people in Mogadishu are being arrested and detained without due process or compliance with the requirement under Somali law either to charge someone or release them within 24 hours. Gedi said he has for some time urged the Parliament to pass an anti-terrorism law, and he is now working with the Speaker of Parliament to move such a law forward. In the interim, Gedi assured us, a committee of five -- the Commissioner of Police, Chief of Intelligence, Army Chief of Staff, Mayor of Mogadishu, and the Commander of Ethiopian Military forces -- is responsible for

decision-making on arrests and detentions. Gedi said that no action can be taken without the agreement of all.

¶15. (C) Gedi blamed the arrests and detentions in part on poorly trained and overzealous security personnel. "These things happen," he said, adding that "you give them one gram of instruction and they take ten." He pointed out that it was when he was in Beledweyn that the security forces ransacked the home of former President Abdi Qassim, which caused him to have to return quickly to Mogadishu to help rectify. He suggested that with the committee of five, security operations will be more carefully thought through, and mistakes should be less frequent.

¶16. (C) In terms of implementing the announced amnesty, Gedi said, the committee of five just listed has overseen a classification of cases and will now begin to take action either to charge or to release those detained. Amnesty is for former members of the Islamic Courts and their forces, but not "for those who have killed." Other than known terrorists and murderers, according to Gedi, everyone else will be given amnesty.

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National Reconciliation Congress  
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¶17. (C) On the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC), Gedi said the National Governance and Reconciliation Committee (NGRC) has been enlarged to include two new representatives from the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr and the Darood/Marehan. Gedi reported that the TFG has completed its dialogue with the sub-clans of the Haber Gedir, and they have agreed to disarm, participate fully in the NRC, and support the TFG. (Comment: If so, and we highly doubt it, the NRC should have no problem starting on July 15 and proceeding smoothly. End Comment).

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¶18. (C) The Ambassador asked for assurances from the PM that the NRC will address political issues in addition to social reconciliation issues. Gedi said that social reconciliation and issues of property restitution will dominate the first part of the NRC. However, the Roadmap as published in March remains the guiding document for the TFG in terms of expected outcomes of reconciliation, and Gedi said that the NRC will address political issues which will likely lead to political outcomes.

¶19. (C) Gedi said the TFG met earlier this week with the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr, who are raising new issues and asking for government positions. The TFG is requesting that the Ayr hand over their weapons and ammunition. The committee of five is negotiating with the Ayr, with support from AMISOM, to coordinate the handover of weapons. Gedi claims the handover will take place on or before July 15.

¶10. (C) Gedi claims the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Suleiman and Hawiye/Duduble also now support the government in addition to the Ayr. Gedi said he spoke with Ali Mahdi, the Chairman of the NGRC, and recommended that Mahdi meet with all Hawiye prior to the NRC. The only remaining issue now with regard to the NRC, according to Gedi, is financial. He said if the NGRC had the financial resources they could bring the delegates to Mogadishu tomorrow. The TFG provided some support to the NGRC in order to allow rehabilitation and construction work to begin on the venue. (Comment: On June 22, Mohamoud Jirdeh Hussein, Deputy Chairman of the NGRC, told us the TFG promised \$250,000 but has only provided \$100,000. Still, there has been no prior disclosure of a financial contribution of any kind from the TFG. End Comment).

¶11. (C) On the question of security for the NRC, Gedi said that by the end of June 1,400 police will have been trained. A minimum of 1,000 will be deployed in Mogadishu. Gedi is confident that the Somali police, in conjunction with AMISOM and Ethiopian forces, will be able to provide adequate security. He said that if there is general agreement among the clans to participate positively in the NRC, then the risk of spoilers disrupting the process will be minimized.

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Looming "Constitutional Crisis"  
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¶12. (C) Gedi told us his government now has 90 days -- until October 10 -- to achieve its mandate in the Transitional Federal Charter to implement a federal system for the country within two and half years of the start of the transition. This would require having fully formed regional and district administrations in place, and a constitutional process under way. If the TFG fails to fulfill its mandate within the time stipulated they must seek a parliamentary vote of confidence, which could lead to the dissolution of the Gedi government. In most of the country -- including Gedo, and Lower and Upper Shabelle, there has been no progress on the creation of a federal system.

¶13. (C) The Commission charged with drafting a new constitution has completed their initial research and are now ready to work on a draft. However, according to Gedi, only two or three members of the 14-member commission are competent, and even they lack the capacity to turn data and research into a constitution. He asked us to provide constitutional lawyers who are experts on Somalia to work with the Chair and members of the commission to draft a constitution. A first draft is needed in 30 days, after which the TFG would have 30 days to consult on the draft before sending to Parliament. (Comment: The development process for a constitution is not/not part of the mandate that the TFG must complete by October 10. In fact, we and our international partners engaged on Somalia, view the establishment of a process for creating a constitution as a key outcome of the NRC, primarily because it will require broad consultation and input rather than be the product of a handful of people. End Comment)

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Security Issues  
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¶14. (C) Jihadists are targeting TFG intel and police officers, according to Gedi. He said two police officers were killed on June 20, and he asked the U.S. to consider providing security assistance. TFG security forces, particularly the intelligence forces, need capacity building, training, equipment, and logistical support. Gedi claimed that even tax collectors are in danger of being targeted.

¶15. (C) Gedi said that on June 20 security forces captured 25 "trainees" on the compound of warlord and MP Mohamed Qanyare (Hawiye/Murosade). The trainees were allegedly being trained in

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assassinations and explosions by two individuals with experience in Afghanistan. Without any further detail Gedi said Qanyare, who has immunity as an MP, has agreed "to cooperate."

¶16. (C) Anticipating the eventual replacement of African Union forces by a United Nations force, Gedi noted the TFG's desire for "trustworthy leadership." He recommended that the U.S. take an overall leadership role. "We don't want to be cheated again," he said. Deputy Commanders could come from other friendly countries, but he clearly wanted the U.S. to be in charge overall.

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Public Outreach  
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¶17. (SBU) In response to repeated urgings by the Ambassador for more pro-active and robust media and public affairs outreach on the part of the TFG, the PM announced that he has recently added three new staff to his office. We were told he now has on staff a public spokesman, an advisor for external relations (an AMCIT), and a director for outreach to Somalia's regions.

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Immediate Travel Plans  
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¶18. (U) Gedi departs Saturday for Washington and New York (Ref B). He plans to travel to Accra on July 1 for the AU Summit, and then return to Nairobi on July 4. After Nairobi he intends to travel to Riyadh. The Saudis, according to Gedi, are eager to support the NRC and TFG security efforts.  
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